

Boone Memorial Presbyterian Church

Health & Safety Plan

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Hospitality and Visitor Engagement	2
Building Access	3
Gun Free Campus	3
Intruder Response and Active Shooter Protocol	3
Training Leaders	4
Video Surveillance Equipment (Security Cameras)	4
Protest and Civil Disturbance Response	4
Threatening Communications	5
Fire Safety Plan	6
Responding to a Medical Emergency	6
Slips, Trips, and Falls	7
Weather-Related Emergencies	7
Incident Reporting Follow-up	8
Continuity of Operations	8
Related Policies	9
Supporting Documents	10

HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN

Introduction

At Boone Presbyterian Church, we affirm that every person is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and is of sacred worth. As a community of faith, we are called to love and care for one another, providing a space that is not only welcoming but also safe for all who gather. The following policy affirms that safety and sacred hospitality are not opposing goals. Our commitment to justice and peace requires that we prepare for threats without abandoning compassion.

This policy establishes guidelines for emergency preparedness, responses to threats or medical situations, and the ongoing training necessary to equip both our leaders as well as our congregation to act with wisdom, courage, and compassion. By preparing well, we not only safeguard the well-being of our community but also embody Christ's command to "love one another" in practical and meaningful ways (John 13:34).

Hospitality and Visitor Engagement

- Greeters serve as frontline ministers of hospitality and attentiveness. All visitors should be welcomed warmly, with eye contact and a gracious spirit. A greeting such as "Welcome! Is this your first time with us?" helps establish a connection while also offering an opportunity to observe behavior and ensure comfort and safety for all.
- During large gatherings (e.g., Christmas, Easter, Funerals, etc.) at least one designated greeter will be stationed at or near the main entrance for the duration of the event. Their presence is twofold: To offer a warm and welcoming greeting in keeping with our congregation's call for inclusive hospitality; and to serve as a first point of observation for any concerns.
- Volunteers are encouraged to remain present and attentive, especially if a guest appears confused, distressed, or disruptive. If concern arises, the greeter/usher should:
 - Engage kindly and without confrontation;
 - Seek assistance—discreetly, if needed—from another volunteer or staff member;
 - Avoid leaving the person alone or unattended in sensitive areas.
- No person will be profiled or treated differently based on appearance, race, gender identity, or other characteristics. Behaviors, not identity, guide safety awareness.

Building Access (Locking & Unlocking of Exterior Doors)

Boone has four entrances on the main floor. The primary entrance (which leads into the narthex) and the ramp entrance are used most frequently. The other two doors are located on either side of the chancel—one adjacent to the sacristy and the other adjacent to the music room.

As a best practice for building safety, no more than two entrances should remain unlocked during worship services and other large gatherings - generally, the primary (narthex) and ramp entrances.

The downstairs has three easily accessible entrances/exits available: one in Shupe Hall, one connected to the kitchen area, and one connected to the downstairs classroom. These doors remain locked during worship services.

- These doors may remain unlocked during events held in these areas, provided that all other doors remain locked.

Gun Free Campus

Boone Memorial Presbyterian Church is a gun-free campus. Firearms are not permitted in church buildings except for authorized law enforcement personnel.

Intruder Response and Active Shooter Protocols

- **Notifying Emergency Services:** All elders who are able to do so safely should call 911 immediately in an emergency.
- **Notifying Upstairs Classrooms:** In an emergency, all adults should be notified immediately. They should close and, if possible, lock doors, turn off lights, quiet children, and hide until an “all clear” is given.
- **Staff & Volunteer Roles:** The pastor, elders and key volunteers (e.g., greeters) are designated to guide people to safety and interact with law enforcement.
- **Post-Incident Communication:** The pastor (or, in the case of the pastor’s absence, an elder) will communicate with the congregation during and after an incident. This communication will take the form of a verbal announcement and an email; it will be both informative and pastoral in tone—providing clear updates about what occurred and offering reassurance, care, and theological grounding in the aftermath.

Training Staff & Volunteers

Staff, Greeters, Tech Team Volunteers, and other designated leaders shall receive training on emergency procedures and situational response. Training will include:

- Familiarity with exits, fire extinguishers, and first aid kits.
- Scenario-based discussions of common risks (e.g., medical emergency; disruptive guest)
- Documenting incidents (e.g., medical emergency; suspicious interactions)
- Maintaining a welcoming posture while remaining attentive to potential concerns.

Trained staff and volunteers will be asked to carry phones with them during worship services and given the authority to call 911 if an emergency arises.

Video Surveillance Equipment (Security Cameras)

Security cameras cover the two main entrances to the church. Recordings will be stored securely and deleted on a rolling basis unless retained for incident review.

In accordance with our commitment to privacy and dignity, camera footage is typically reviewed only in response to a specific incident or concern. Brief “spot checks” of recorded footage may be conducted by authorized personnel to ensure system functionality and to verify general safety during overnight hours or when the building is otherwise unoccupied. Parking lot and entrance cameras may also be monitored in real time during worship or other public events.

Protest and Civil Disturbance Response

Boone’s commitment to justice may at times invite opposition, but our response will always aim to preserve dignity and de-escalate tension. We affirm that even those who protest us are made in God’s image, and we will attempt to respond with courage and compassion.

- **Modifying Building Use:** If protest activity delays or modifies building use, the Pastor and Session will consult with program leaders and communicate with the congregation.
- **Non-Escalation and Non-Engagement:** Staff, volunteers, and members should avoid verbal or physical engagement with protestors. If a protest occurs during a service or event, congregants should remain indoors.

- **Unwanted Visitors During Worship:** Boone desires to be a house of prayer for all people. However, if a protester disrupts worship or another event, a designated staff member or volunteer may respectfully ask them to leave. As a last resort, law enforcement may be called.
- **Designated Liaison:** The Pastor or a designee (ideally, a currently serving elder) will serve as liaison with protestors, law enforcement, and external parties—assessing whether protest activity is escalating, requesting respect for church property, and reporting serious disruptions.
- **Pastoral Communication:** The Pastor or a designee (ideally, a currently serving elder,) will offer a pastoral message to the congregation following any incident that targets or threatens specific individuals or groups within our community. This communication will reflect our commitments to compassion, justice, and the safety of all.
- **Public Statements:** If a protest draws media attention, the Pastor and Session will issue public or social media statements. The church will maintain a calm, non-reactive stance. Only authorized individuals may speak on behalf of the congregation.

Threatening Communications:

- **Non-Escalation and Non-Engagement:** Staff, volunteers, and congregation members should not engage with negative or threatening emails, calls, or social media messages.
- **Immediate Reporting:** Any staff member or volunteer who receives a threatening or harassing communication must report it to the Pastor without delay. The communication should not be deleted, ignored, or destroyed.
- **Documentation:** All threats must be documented thoroughly—save and print emails, keep original letters, capture screenshots of social media posts, and write down details of any phone calls (e.g., time, date, content, phone number). If feasible, calls may be recorded by placing them on speaker and using a secondary device. Documentation will be stored securely in the church office.
- **Law Enforcement Notification:** Any credible threat (e.g., physical harm, violent intent, property damage) must be reported to local law enforcement by the Pastor or a designee, with supporting documentation. When in doubt, it is better to notify authorities and later learn that the concern was unfounded than to withhold information that could pose a risk.
- **Responding to Threatening Calls:** Remain calm. Politely end hostile calls, avoid sharing personal information, and document the exchange as outlined above.

- **No Direct Response:** Do not respond directly to threatening communications. Any necessary follow-up will be coordinated through legal counsel or law enforcement.
- **Security Measures:** Depending on the nature of the threat, the Pastor and/or Session may implement additional security measures, notify relevant staff and community groups, or adjust building access protocols.
- **Congregational Communication:** If a threat poses risk to the congregation, the Pastor and Session will decide how to communicate the situation clearly and calmly to the community. The church will remain transparent and responsive while avoiding sensationalism.
- **Pastoral Communication:** If a threat targets a particular group (e.g., LGBTQ+ members, clergy), pastoral care will be offered and appropriate support resources shared.

Fire Safety Evacuation Plan

Every room in our building has a map with fire extinguishers and evacuation routes clearly marked. Event leaders should familiarize themselves with these maps.

1. Immediate Response:

- If smoke or fire is detected, call 911 immediately.
- Staff and other trained volunteers should guide attendees toward the nearest exits in a calm and orderly manner.

2. Evacuation Process:

- All occupants should exit the building using the nearest marked fire exits and proceed to the Boone Parking Lot, the designated assembly area.
- Elevators should not be used in the event of a fire.
- If an individual requires assistance exiting the building, volunteers should be prepared to assist or to direct emergency personnel to their location.

3. Post-Evacuation:

- The pastor, staff, or designated safety personnel should account for as many individuals as possible at the assembly area.
- No one should re-enter the building until cleared by emergency responders.

Responding to a Medical Emergency

In the event of a medical emergency occurring during worship, an outside event, or at any time on church property, the following steps should be taken:

1. Assess the Situation:

- If the individual is unconscious, unresponsive, having difficulty breathing, or experiencing severe bleeding, call 911 immediately.
- If the person is conscious and responsive, ask them what assistance they need and proceed accordingly.

2. Immediate Actions:

- If CPR is needed, a trained individual should begin chest compressions while waiting for emergency responders.
- First aid kits are available on each floor of the building and are for use in minor injuries.

3. Notification & Documentation:

- The pastor, or a member of Session should be informed as soon as possible.
- If the emergency occurs during worship or a large gathering, an announcement may be made if necessary to direct people calmly.
- To ensure space for first responders and protect privacy, worshipers or event participants may need to be directed to another area.
- After the incident, an Incident Report Form should be completed.

Slips, Trips, and Falls

To reduce the risk of injury on church property, the following measures should be observed:

1. Prevention:

- Walkways should remain clear of obstacles, cords, and other tripping hazards.
- Spills should be cleaned immediately.
- During winter months, entryways should be cleared of ice, snow, or wet floors.

2. Response:

- If a fall occurs, do not move the individual unless they are in immediate danger.
- Check for injuries and, if needed, call 911.
- Provide first aid as appropriate, using supplies from the nearest first aid kit.
- Ensure that the area is marked or blocked off if the hazard which caused the fall cannot be removed.
- Any slip, trip or fall should be documented using the Health & Safety Report Form and reported to staff or church leadership.

Weather-Related Emergencies

Church staff and leaders are encouraged to monitor weather conditions, especially on days when severe weather is forecasted. The following procedures should be followed in case of inclement weather.

- **Tornado or High Winds:** In the event of a tornado warning or high winds, all individuals should move away from windows and seek shelter in interior rooms, hallways, or designated storm-safe areas.
- **Lightning & Severe Thunderstorms:** Outdoor activities should be paused, and individuals should move inside immediately. If power is lost, emergency lighting will activate in key areas of the building.
- **Extreme Heat or Cold:** When extreme temperatures pose a risk, efforts should be made to ensure that the building remains climate-controlled and that those in attendance— especially vulnerable individuals—have access to water, warmth, or cooling as needed.
- **Evacuation or Shelter-in-Place Decisions:** In extreme weather conditions, church leadership may determine that it is safest to shelter in place rather than dismiss a gathering. If it is necessary to evacuate due to flooding, structural concerns, or other hazards, clear exit instructions will be given.
- **Winter Weather & Parking Lot Safety:** In snowy or icy conditions, entrances and walkways should be salted, and caution should be used when navigating the parking lot. If conditions are unsafe, the pastor (in consultation with Session as appropriate) may close or modify services to reduce risk. Any changes to the service schedule will be communicated as soon as possible, using as many different methods as possible.

Incident Reporting and Follow-Up

All incidents, whether medical emergencies, disruptive behavior, safety concerns, or suspicious interactions, must be documented using the Health & Safety Report Form. Reports should be completed as soon as possible after the incident and submitted to the Pastor, Office Manager, or Resource Committee Chairperson.

Incident reports will be reviewed by the Session or a designated safety group to assess lessons learned, update procedures, and provide follow-up training as needed. Personal information will be kept confidential. Incident reporting is a vital tool for both safety and accountability.

Continuity of Operations

We strive to be a resilient, Spirit-led community that serves and worships faithfully no matter the circumstances. If our campus becomes temporarily inaccessible due to a natural disaster, law enforcement activity, or other emergency, the following measures will help ensure continuity of worship, pastoral care, and communication:

- The Pastor and Session will assess building use and determine alternate arrangements.
- Weekly worship remains one of our highest priorities and may shift to online platforms, alternate venues, or outdoor gatherings in order to ensure that it can proceed.
- Other essential ministries (e.g., pastoral care; mission) will be coordinated via phone and email. Fellowship groups (e.g., Women's Association, Adult Sunday School, Boone Book Club) may meet off-site when appropriate.
- A reciprocal agreement with another church may ensure emergency use of space.

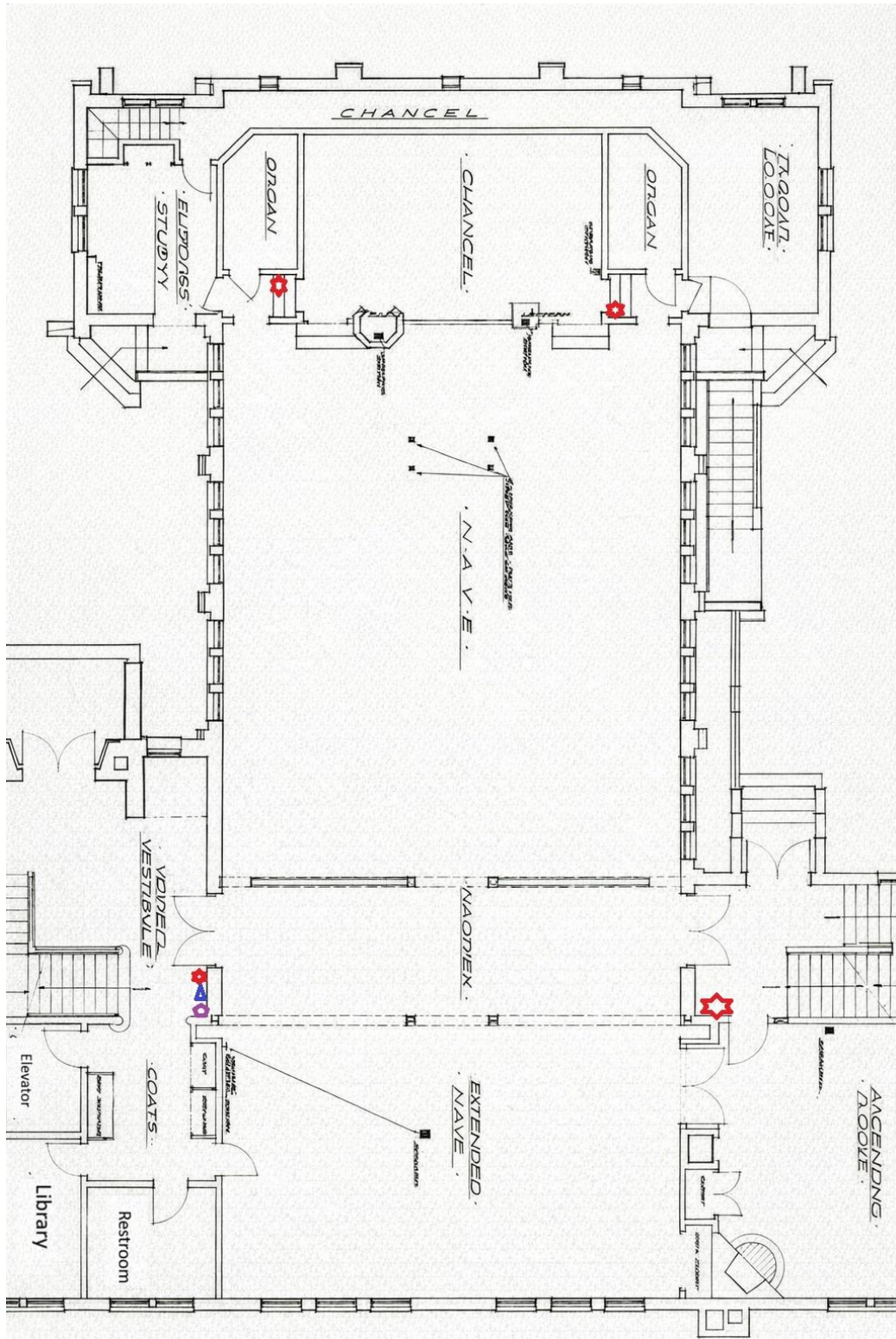
Related Policies

Certain aspects of health and safety are addressed in separate policies to ensure clear and thorough guidance. These documents are essential components of Boone's broader commitment to fostering a secure, welcoming environment and should be referenced in conjunction with this plan.

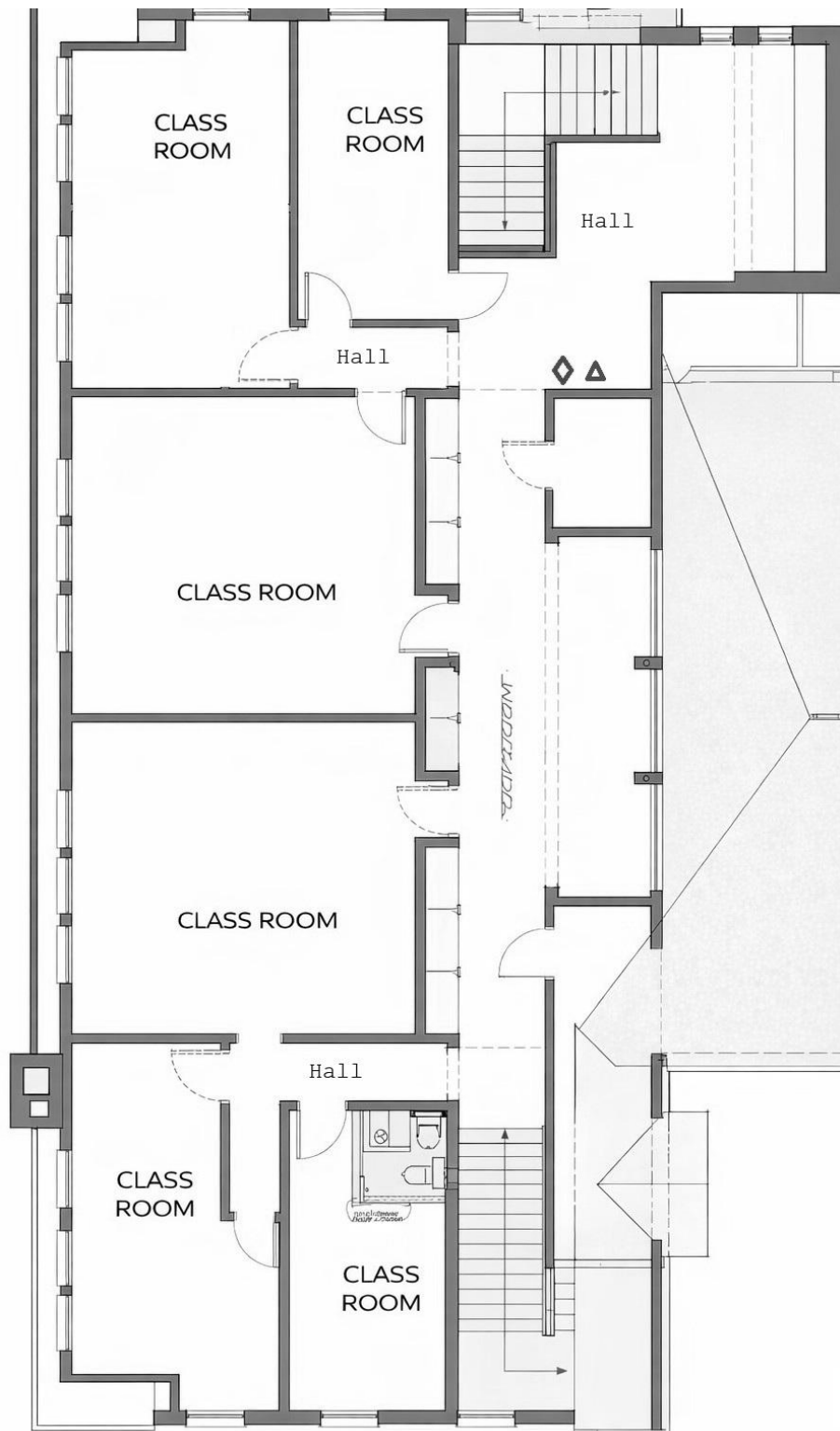
- **Abuse Response Policy:** Establishes safeguards for the well-being of minors and vulnerable adults, including screening, training, and supervision requirements for those in caregiving or leadership roles.
- **Sexual Misconduct Policy:** Affirms the church's commitment to a safe and respectful environment and outlines procedures for reporting and addressing concerns.
- **Other Official Policies** as approved by Session and listed at boonepcusa.org/documents.

Supporting Documents

Map of Sanctuary:



Map of Upstairs:



Map of Basement:

